

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 26, 2003. Claims 2-6, 10-22, 29, 30, and 47-62 are presented for examination, of which claims 17 and 47 are in independent form. Claims 1-3, 7-9, 23-28, and 31-46 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of their subject matter. Claims 4-6, 10, 11, 13, 17, 20, 22, 29, and 30 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention, and claims 47-62 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of Claims 17-22 and the indication that claims 2-9, 13, 14, 24, 25, 30, 33, 34, 40, 41, and 46 would be allowable if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim, and with no change in scope. Allowable Claims 4-6 have been amended to depend upon allowed Claim 17, and are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 10, 11, 30, 45, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

First, cancellation of Claims 45 and 46 renders the rejections of those claims moot.

The remaining claims have been carefully reviewed and amended as deemed necessary to ensure that they conform fully to the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph, with special attention to the points raised in paragraph 9 of the Office Action. It is believed that

the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 26, and 42 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,557,446 (*Kato*). Claims 10, 12, 15, and 16 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kato* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,694,164 (*Noguchi*). Claims 29 and 45 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kato* and U.S. Patent No. 5,089,907 (*Yoshikawa et al.*). Claims 31, 32, 35-37, and 39 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kato* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,731,623 (*Oda et al.*). Claims 23, 27, 28, 38, 43, and 44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Kato*.

Cancellation of Claims 1, 23, 26-28, and 31, 32, 35-39, and 42-46 renders the rejections of those claims moot.

Claims 10, 29, and 30 have been amended to depend upon allowed Claim 17. Accordingly, Claims 10, 29, and 30 are believed to be in condition for allowance. The remaining rejected claims depend upon Claim 10, and are believed also to be in condition for allowance.

New independent Claim 47 recites features similar to those of allowed Claim 17 and is also believed to be in condition for allowance.

The other claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the

invention, individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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